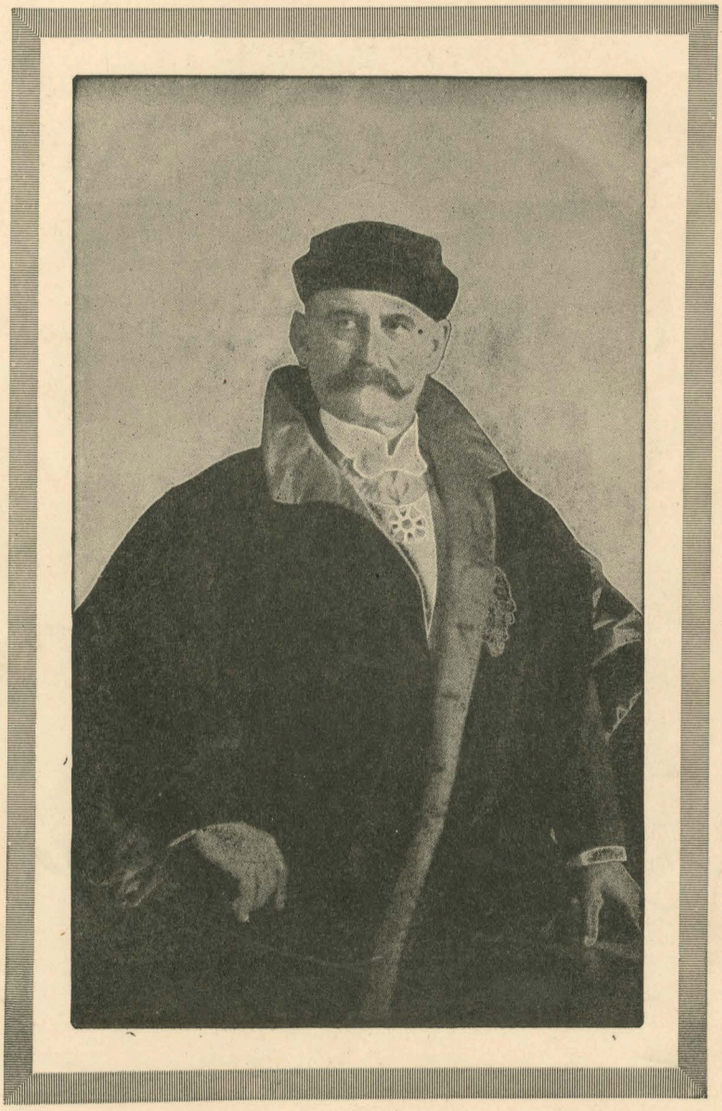
POLISH DANCE

Op. 3, No. 1

By

XAVER SCHARWENKA



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AND METHOD OF STUDY

Saint Louis London

Grade 4-B Price 70 Cents (Old No. 624) New No. 804

PROGRESSIVE SERIES COMPOSITIONS

Catalog No. 804 Grade 4-b

POLISH DANCE, Op. 3, No. 1

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.—XAVER FRANZ SCHARWENKA.

Born, 1850, at Samter, Posen.

THE works of this extremely prolific composer entitle him to a high rank amongst the best modern composers.

He was first a pupil of Kullak's Academy, and upon graduating became widely known as pianist and conductor, and has made tours through Europe and the United States. He founded the Scharwenka Conservatory in Berlin, and later, in 1891, established this Conservatory in New York, and after seven years of activity there he returned to Berlin, to become director of the Klindworth-Scharwenka Conservatory. He was appointed court pianist to the Emperor of Austria, and was named Professor by Emperor William II., of Germany.

As previously remarked, he is the composer of an enormous list of works, of which, perhaps the best known are his Polish Dances.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

This composition, as its title states, is a Polish National Dance. There are two principal National Polish Dances—the Polonaise, and the Masurek, or Mazurka. The name of the Mazurka is derived from the "Masureks," the inhabitants of the district of Masovia. The time of the Mazurka is 3/4 or 3/8. The clinking together of the spurs (a feature of this dance) occurs on the second quarter. The rhythmic expression lends great charm to this national dance.

This composition is one of the most widely known in modern pianoforte literature. The character of its main theme is extremely exuberant, or as the composer expresses it, fiery. The contrasting theme is very dainty and beautiful in character, and will amply repay all the labor necessary to learn to render it with fidelity to the composer's intentions. Scharwenka played the piece himself in his concerts throughout the United States, with great success. And it will form a most desirable addition to your stock of pieces.

FORM-ANALYSIS

FIRST DIVISION, LARGE THREE-PART SONG FORM—First part, 16 measure period (1-16). Middle part, 16 measure period (17-32). Third part. First part repeated (33-48).

SECOND DIVISION, DOUBLE PERIOD—Introduction (49-52) 4 measures. First period, 8 measures (53-60a); repeated (53-60b). Second period, 8 measures (61-68); repeated (69-76).

THIRD DIVISION—Preceded by modulatory passage (77-80). This division differs from the first division by the insertion of measures 114 to 128—preceding the third part; these measures are a free repetition of the motives from the second division.

The student should carefully compare the parts beginning at measures 53 and 113, respectively, and identify each motive or measure of the new part, and also see what new material is introduced, and also notice the change of key.

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TEMPO—This piece is marked "Sehr feurig,"—"very fiery." The title of the piece in German is, "Polish National Dance," without specifying more particularly which one is meant; therefore, we have more latitude in selecting a tempo, and we advise against hurrying the piece; time should always be allowed to attend to the touch and give each tone or chord a chance to be heard, otherwise the playing becomes cold and hard.

ORNAMENTS—It will be noticed that the passing-shakes in measures 55 and 59 are not exactly alike. Good taste dictates the form of each; there is no difference in principle, but only in the form.

SLURS—The slurs must be carefully observed; they are played according to rules with which you are already familiar. Owing to the form of the motives, the accent of measures 1 and 2 falls on the second beat; of measures 3 and 4 on the third beat; the matter between the accents should be played much more softly.

PEDALS—The piece will gain by not using the damper pedal at all throughout the entire piece. Whether the soft pedal should be used to assist in shading from loud to soft depends much upon the particular piano; the soft pedal would contribute to the musical interpretation of measures 21, 22, 23, 29, 30, 31, 32.

TOUCH—Play light staccato, with wrist stroke touch, and heavy chords with pressure touch. The notes of the chromatic scale figures in the alto part of the seventeenth and following measures should be connected so closely as almost to overlap, while all other notes in these measures are played with a musical staccato (finger touch by stroke, but instantly releasing the keys). On the contrary, the part beginning at measure 53 should be played with the leggiero touch.

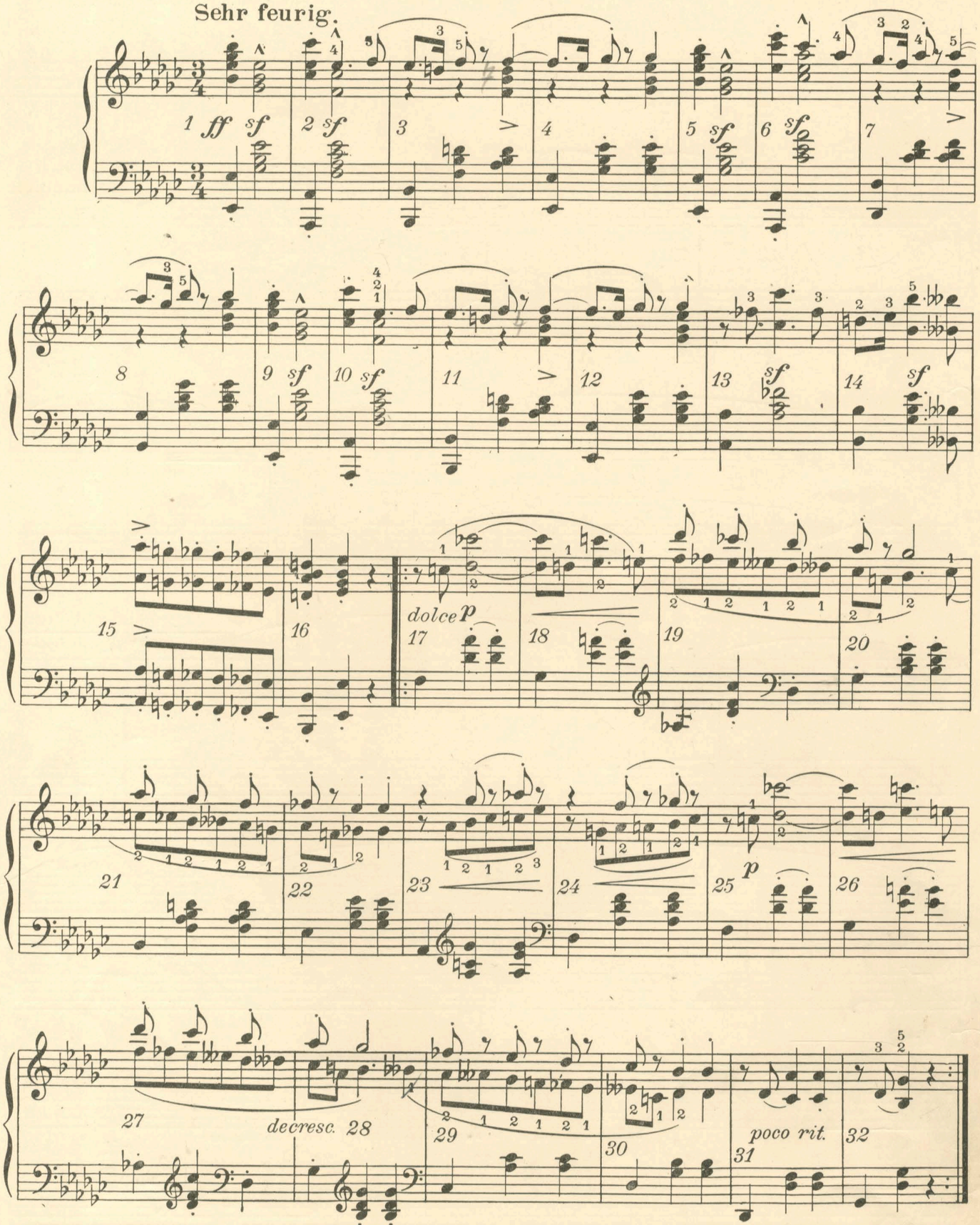
MEMORIZING—Memorize from motive to motive. From measure 17 to 32, learn first the alto (parts of the chromatic scale) gradually adding the other parts, observing at the same time how the soprano is added to the other parts (interrupted-sixths).

CAUTION—Apply the devices for practicing chords and passages wherever necessary, stopping to work out every troublesome detail, even if consisting of only two notes. Only by attention to little things can you gradually polish your work.

Polish Dance.

POLNISCHER NATIONALTANZ.

XAVER SCHARWENKA. Op.3. No 1



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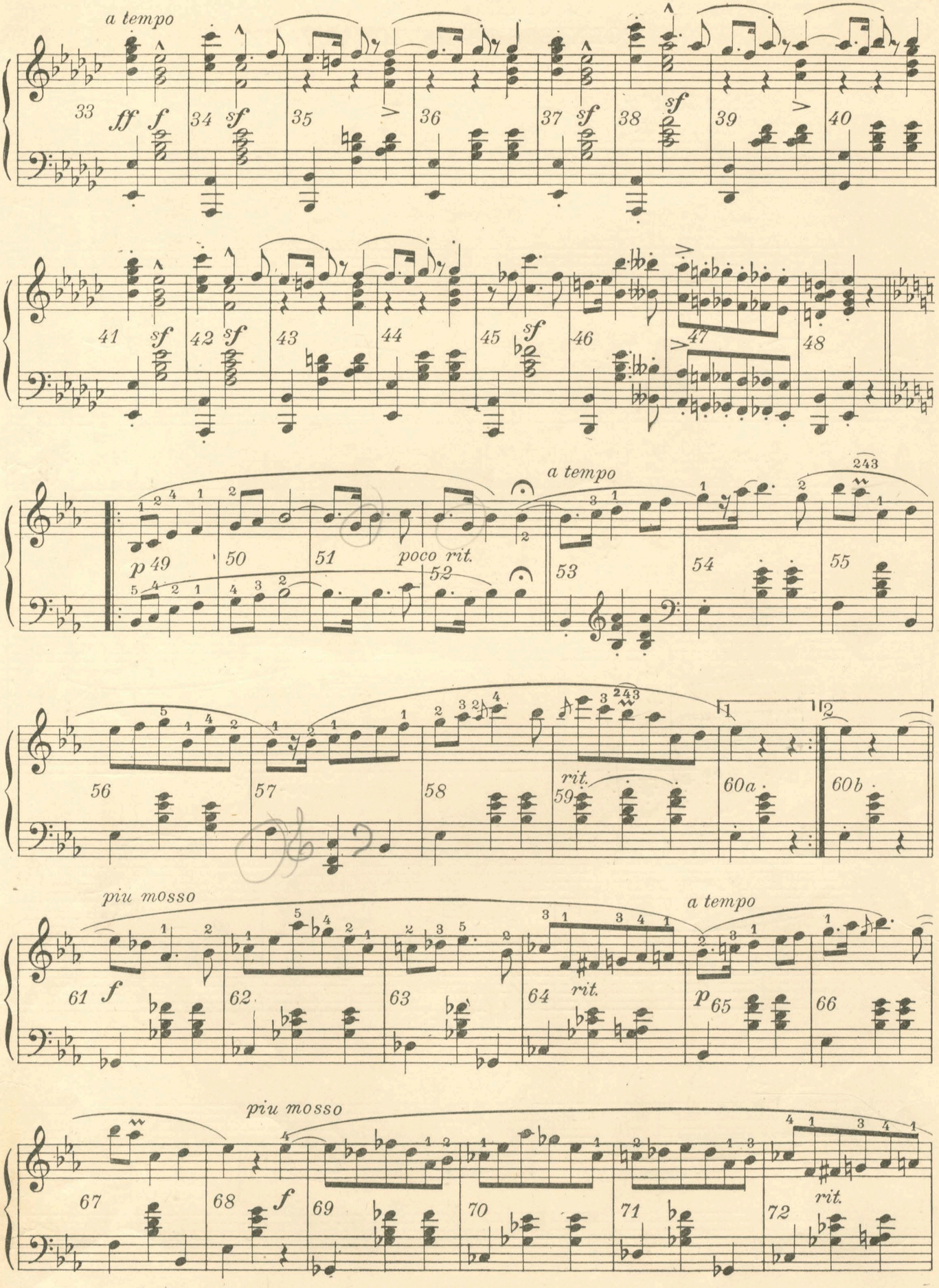
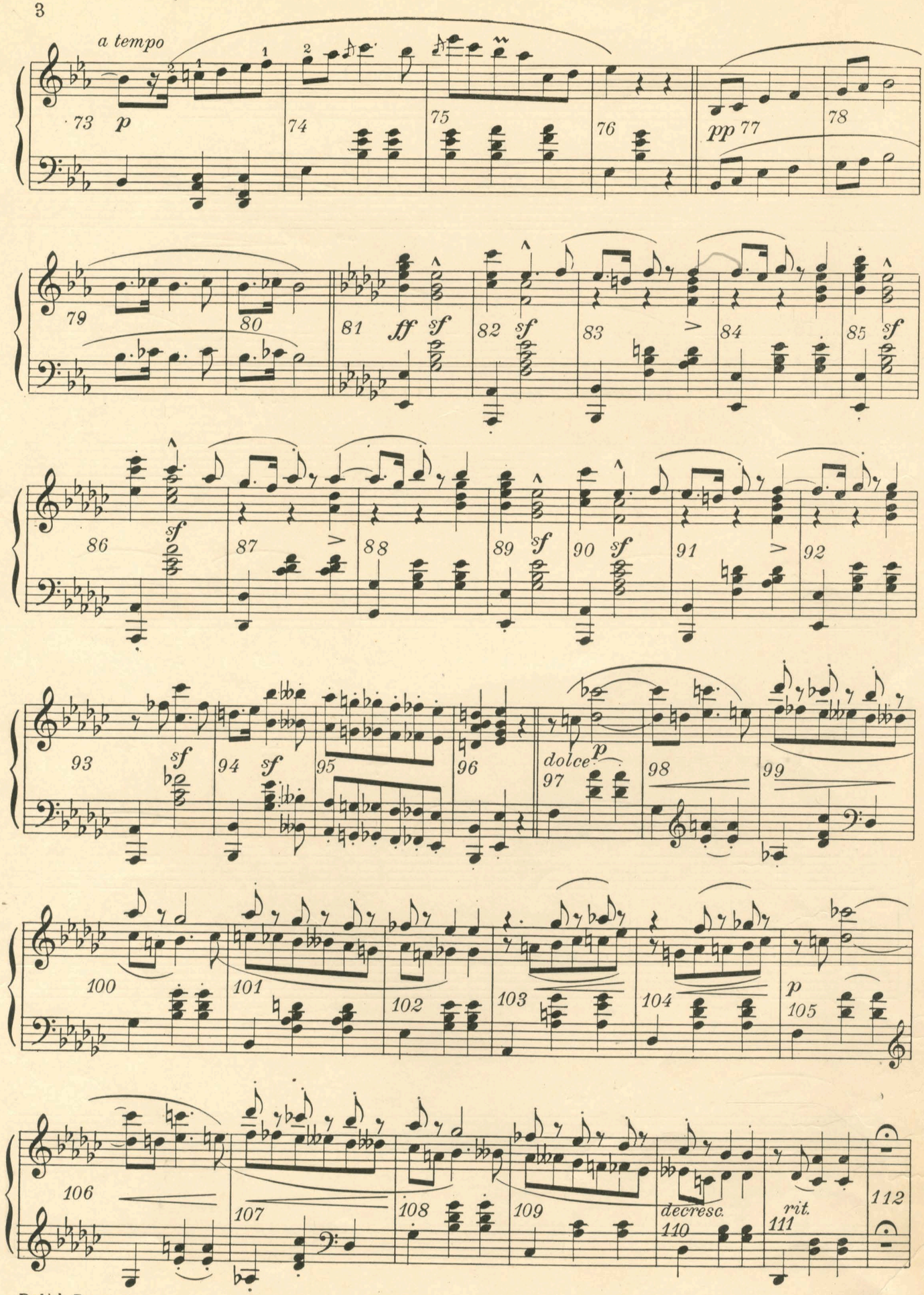
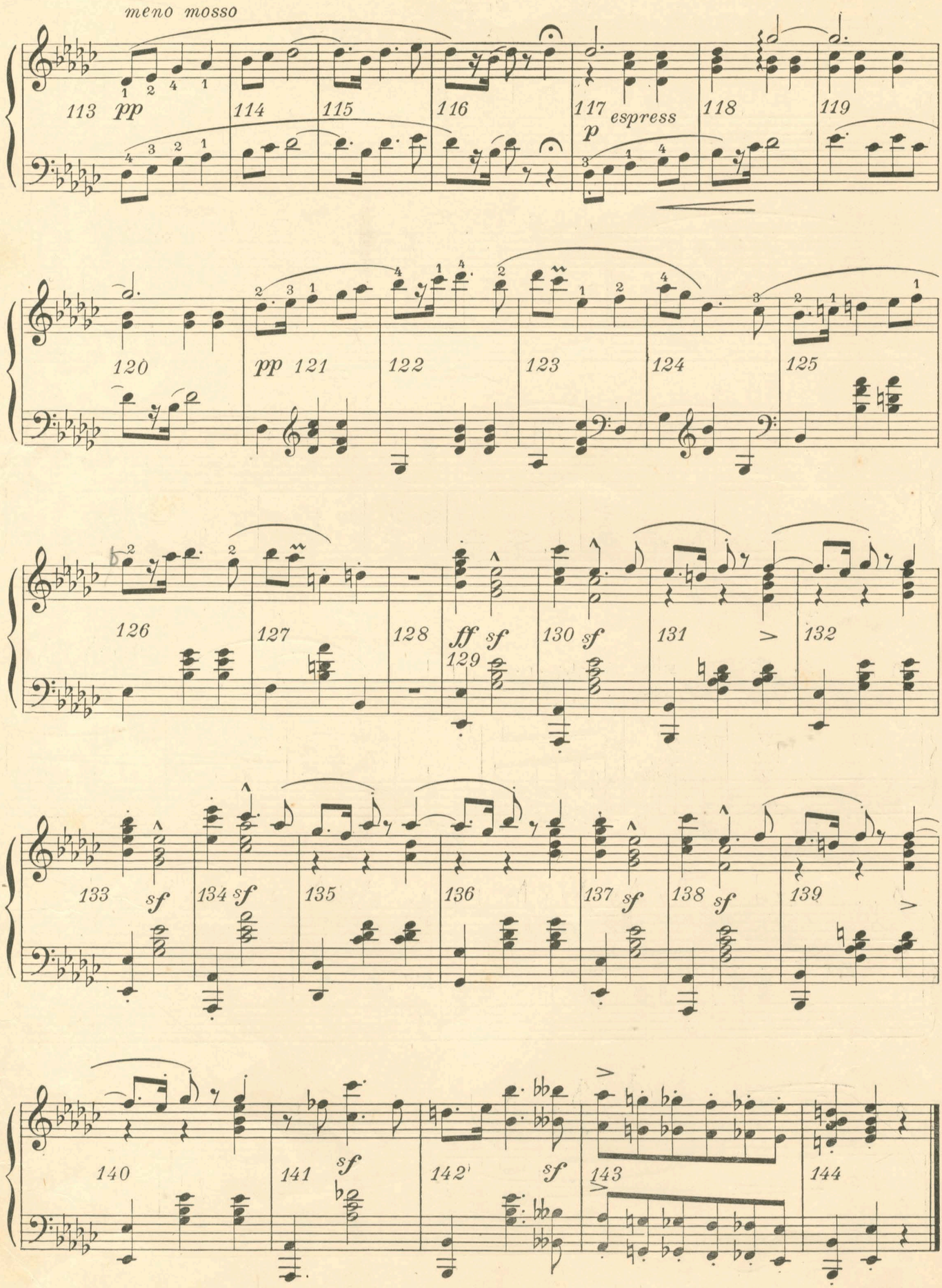

a tempo
33 ff f
34 sf
35
36
37 sf
38 sf
39
40
41 sf
42 sf
43
44
45 sf
46
47
48
p 49
50
51
poco rit.
52
a tempo
53
54
55
56
57
58
rit.
59
60a
60b
piu mosso
61 f
62
63
64 rit.
a tempo
p 65
66
piu mosso
67
68 f
69
70
71
72
rit.


a tempo
p
pp
ff
sf
dolce
decresc.
rit.


meno mosso
113 pp
114
115
116
117 espress
p
118
119
120
pp 121
122
123
124
125
126
127
128
ff sf
129
130 sf
131
132
133 sf
134 sf
135
136
137 sf
138 sf
139
140
141 sf
142
sf
143
144